REMARKS

Claims 2-45 are pending, of which claims 2 and 20 are independent method claims with corresponding independent computer program product claims 11 and 29, and claim 38 is an independent computer program product claim. As indicated above, claims 2, 11, 20, 29, and 38 have been amended by this paper, and claims 8, 17, 26, 35, and 43 have been canceled without prejudice. Applicants note for the record that the subject matter of claims 8, 17, 26, 35, and 43 has been incorporated into the corresponding independent claims, and therefore canceling these claims does not evince an intent to surrender any subject matter.

The Office Action rejected independent claims 2 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,828,847 to Gehr et al. ("*Gehr*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,678,041 to Baker et al. ("*Baker*"); and rejected independent claims 20, 29, and 38 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Gehr*. The Office Action rejected the dependent claims as either anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) by *Gehr* or as unpatentable over *Gehr* in view of *Baker* under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).[1]

Applicants' invention, as claimed for example in independent method claim 1, relates to improving access to any of one or more services provided by a plurality of remote service providers. At a log-in service, the method determines the validity of a log-in request received from a client system, and generates a list of one or more services that can be accessed by the client system. The list of one or more services comprises one or more available service providers for the list of one or more services so that if an available service provider for a requested service becomes unavailable, the client system can look to any other available service provider that is listed for the requested service. The method downloads the list to the client system so that the client system can use the downloaded list in accessing the requested service. At the requested service, the method specifies one or more additional services and one or more corresponding service providers, previously unknown to the client, that are available for client access, and downloads the identified one or more additional services and the one or more corresponding service providers to the client, such that the requested service introduces the one or more additional services to the client without involvement of the log-in service. For example,

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[1] Although the prior art status of the cited art is not being challenged at this time, Applicants reserve the right to do so in the future. Accordingly, any arguments and amendments made herein should not be construed as acquiescing to any prior art status or asserted teachings of the cited art.

as Applicants describe, an email server may provide a client with the name, port number and IP address of its address book service. Specification, p. 33, ll. 16-17. Independent claims 2, 11, 20, 29, and 38 contain similar limitations, although claim 38 relates to balancing workload among a plurality of service providers.

Gehr discloses a server switching process that functions to populate client communication interfaces with data, update the data, and optionally provide a system operator with access to the data. Col. 4, ll. 25-28; Figure 1. The data identifies the primary server and preferred communication method for a client, as well as a hierarchy of successive alternate servers and communication method pairs. Col. 4, ll. 53-58; Figure 2. The hierarchical organization of the list at each client can be manually created by a system administrator and updated on an as needed basis, or a neuromorphic processing element can monitor system activity and rewrite entries in the lists as a function of changing system activity. Col. 3, ll. 17-23.

Baker discloses a system and method that allows network administrators/managers to rate particular information and/or services so that the rating can be used to restrict specific users from accessing the information/services via certain public or otherwise uncontrolled databases. Col. 3, ll. 8-15. *Baker* uses a relational database to determine access rights and store rating information. Col. 3, ll. 15-17. The relational database is arranged so that for each use of the system, a request for a particular resource will only be passed to a server providing a link to the public/uncontrolled database if the resource identifier has an access rating for which the user has been assigned specific permissions by the administrator/manager. Col. 3, ll. 21-27. Note that in rejecting independent claims 2 and 11, the Office Action acknowledges *Gehr* is silent in regards to validating a request received from a client system, and cites Baker for that purpose.

With respect to the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e) and 103(a), "A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." MPEP § 2131. "[F]or anticipation under 35 U.S.C. 102, the reference must teach every aspect of the claimed invention either explicitly or impliedly." MPEP § 706.02. "To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation . . . to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the

prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations." MPEP § 2143.

Among other things, with respect to independent method claim 1, for example, *Gehr* and *Baker* fail to teach, suggest, or motivate a requested service specifying one or more additional services and one or more corresponding service providers, previously unknown to the client, that are available for client access, and downloading the one or more additional services and one or more corresponding service providers to the client, such that the requested service introduces the one or more additional services to the client without involvement of the log-in service. Rather, as indicated above, *Gehr* discloses a server switching process that populates and updates a client communication interface, with server and communication methods pairs, or provides a system operator with access to the data. *Gehr* does not disclose one service introducing another service to a client without involvement of the server switching process. A similar analysis can be applied to independent claims 11, 20, 29, and 38.

Based on at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited prior art fails to anticipate or make obvious Applicants invention, as claimed for example, in independent claims 2, 11, 20, 29, and 38. Applicants note for the record that the remarks above render the remaining rejections of record for the independent and dependent claims moot, and thus addressing individual rejections or assertions with respect to the teachings of the cited art is unnecessary at the present time, but may be undertaken in the future if necessary or desirable, and Applicants reserve the right to do so.

In the event that the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 20th day of May, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,

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